

PROBLEMS OF A HOME-GROWN SIDE

WYCOMBE Wanderers are by no means the first top amateur club to find success without a deal, if any, of home-bred talent in the side. They most definitely won't be the last either.

But to a proud Town the size of High Wycombe, and to all supporters of its proud Wanderers, there must inevitably be a certain amount of regret that Tony Horseman's departure should leave the Loakes Park squad devoid of players from the immediate vicinity.

The thoughts of Bryan Butcher, whose letter is published this week, are sound. Many echo his sentiments on "Bodger", both on the player's qualities and service to Wanderers, and on his surprising lack of international recognition over the years.

They must also ponder the dilemma of any top amateur side seeking honours, with regards to the question of "all-star" teams. Arguments put forward in the past have been:

- Wanderers no longer run a Reserve side through which young local talent can graduate. The burden of maintaining a second team has apparently proved too heavy financially.

- Football supporters, especially those at Wycombe fed on a diet of success, want instant results. How readily would they be prepared to wait through seasons of "famine"?

Meanwhile I asked Wanderers chairman, Jack Smethurst, how the club feel about the situation. "Of course we'd welcome local talent. We are constantly on the lookout for local talent emerging."



TONY HORSEMAN
... last local Wanderer

TRIBUTE TO HORSEMAN!

THE departure of Tony Horseman from the Wanderers' ranks must bring a tinge of sadness to all Blues' followers, especially those who have been fortunate enough to have been able to watch him since he began his senior career.

In a soccer era when terms such as "sweeper-up", "link-man" and "work-rate" became fashionable, Tony had that priceless asset which will always be in vogue with the ordinary soccer supporter—the asset of being a goalscorer extraordinary, a "crime" for which he was punished heavily by the England amateur side selectors.

The irony is that the England amateur side has one of the poorest scoring records of any side, club or national, over the past few years. The firmest defences could always be prised open by Tony's genius.

There is another sad aspect to Tony's departure. He was one of the few Blue's players of the past few years who actually lived in High Wycombe—dare one say born and bred here too?

The fact that the Blues play such good football these days is doubtless a tribute to Brian Lee. His skill and reputation is such that he can attract the best players in the country to the club. But it appears that the best players do not live or play in the Wycombe area! Yet Tony Horseman was "discovered" playing for a local Wycombe Combination side!

One wonders how much other talent is lying dormant in such leagues and whether any representative of the Wanderers ever bothers to find out!

It has been gratifying to watch Brian Lee's 'All-Stars' play such wonderful football, but, to this writer at least, an injection of local talent would be very welcome. There must be one player at least playing in local junior football who could "make-it" with the Blues, just as Tony Horseman did.

Bryan Butcher,
43 Suffield Road,
High Wycombe.

● See 'Onlookers Diary'

'We accept Berks and Bucks decision'

WYCOMBE Wanderers do not share manager Brian Lee's view that there was a "certain amount of bloody mindedness" about the Berks and Bucks F.A.'s decision last season to refuse the club permission to enter the London Senior Cup.

In a statement issued on Tuesday referring to the manager's comments at the annual meeting last month, club chairman Jack Smethurst says:

"At our A.G.M. you will remember that questions arose regarding the Mid-Week Floodlight League and the possibility of entering the London Senior Cup. I answered these questions and that ended the matter.

"You will also remember that our manager, Brian Lee, spoke about the playing side of the club and answered various questions. In response to one of these questions he used the expression "certain amount of bloody-mindedness" in re-

ference to the Berks and Bucks F.A.'s decision not to allow us to enter the London Senior Cup.

"Since the meeting, I have had several comments from members of the club and, as a result, I felt it necessary as Chairman to say that remarks made by the Manager in no way reflects the feeling of the club towards the decision made by the Berks and Bucks F.A. Their decision was made by them in good faith and after considering all the circumstances, this decision, we, as a club, accept."

J. Smethurst,
Chairman,
Wycombe Wanderers F.C.